C.F. Forbes Gas Station (Texaco Gas Station)
195 N. Raymond Avenue
Pasadena
Los Angeles County
California

HABS No. CA-2616

HABS
CAL
19-PASA,
13-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Western Region
Department of the Interior
San Francisco, California 94107

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDING SURVEY

C.F. FORBES GAS STATION (Texaco Gas Station)

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Location: 195 North Raymond Avenue, (Southwest corner of Raymond and Walnut Ave.), Pasadena, Los Angeles County, California

Present Owner: Pasadena Labor Temple Association

Present Occupant: Brian Anderson Auto Repair

Present Use: Auto repair shop (Hot dog vending cart also on site every weekday)

Significance: This building is the only drive-in auto service/gas station property type remaining in the Old Pasadena Historical District. It is an architecturally intact example of a property type associated with historic development responding to emerging auto use in the city.

Built during the early years of the automotive era, this single story gas station is Spanish in style. The exterior is plaster and the tile edging along the roof is harmonious with the brick buildings across the street. It is one of the few remaining buildings in the Historic District that exhibits an architecture uniquely characteristic of the 1920's: the building combines the massiveness, load bearing walls, and detailing of the Mediterranean / Spanish Revival style of the nearby Civic Center with the horizontal lines of the emerging "streamline" architectural style, representative of newer and faster forms of transportation. The large horizontal openings and service bays, so uncharacteristic of the Mediterranean style, were a functional response to the program requirements of an automobile service station.

By placing of the buildings to the south and east in response to the circulation pattern of automobiles at the intersection, the service station established a siting pattern that was unique from other pre-automobile and many non-automobile buildings, which normally were built as close to the street corner as possible. The openness of the site at the street corner (Photo CA-2616-1) made this service station an identifiable physical landmark and orientation point within the neighborhood, and is perhaps its most significant contribution to the overall fabric of the Old Pasadena Historic District.

PART I HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History

1. Date of erection: A building permit application was submitted to the City of Pasadena and permit number 7787D was issued on May 17 1928. A local phone book which was indexed by property addresses as well as by name, lists 195 North Raymond as vacant in 1928, but as Forbes, C.F. gas station in 1929. This would indicate that the structure was built between the printing of the 1928 and the 1929 phone books, or sometime in mid to late 1928.

2. Architect: Not known

3. Original and Subsequent Owners: The following is a history of the owners of the property as can be ascertained from available records.

The Union Labor Temple Association has owned the property since approximately 1917

1928 - Chas M. Benton. (From building permit issued by City of Pasadena) Note: Telephone directories of this era also refer to the business as the Chas F. Forbes Gas Station.

1931 - Union Labor Temple Association (this information is speculative, but was given by the current manager of the Union Labor Temple Association).

1931 - Goodrich Silvertown Stores (Larry Kaford - District Sales Manager) leased property from Union Labor Temple Association. (Building Permits from the City of Pasadena list Goodrich Silvertown Stores as owner, and phone books from 1931 list them as occupants of the property, but they probably leased it from the Labor Temple Association).

1961 - Independent Texaco Dealer leased property from Union Labor Temple Association. (Building and Alteration Permits from the City of Pasadena list "Texaco" or "Texaco Oil Co." as the owner, and phone books from this year list an Independent Texaco Dealer as the occupant of the property, but again they probably leased from the Labor Temple Association).

1975 - Brian Anderson leased Building B from Union Labor Temple for a small Honda Auto Repair Shop. (This information was obtained directely from Brian Anderson himself).

4. Contractor: Pacific Steel Building Co., 2065 East 51st Street, Los Angeles.

5. Original Plans and Construction: The site contains two buildings which make up the service station. The Southemmost building, hereinafter referred to as "Building A", is a shed roof steel frame building with a solid plaster exterior skin. The parapets on the north and east sides also are capped with a layer of clay barrel tile and overhanging

"roofline". The building was probably originally characterized by several drive-in auto-service bays along the front, although all but one has been infilled with glass and metal to enclose the building.

The northernmost building, hereinafter referred to as "Building B", is brick with wood roof joists. The exterior walls are finished with smooth plaster. The flat roof is made of built up bituminous roofing membrane. The parapets are capped with a layer of clay barrel tiles, which overhang the walls slightly, creating a unique but contextually harmonious roofline. The center of the building is characterized by a large drive-in bay, with enclosed office/customer service space to the north, and parts storage to the south.

Originally there were gas pumps on the property, in front of the buildings. No architectural plans or early photos of the site or buildings have been located, so a complete description of the original appearance is unavailable.

6. Alterations and Additions: The following list is compiled from a record of building permits issued by the City of Pasadena, and kept in their microfiche files.

1928 - Heavy Canvas awning erected on the south side of the building to provide protection from the sun.

1929 - Cloth sign erected 6' x 24'
Contractor - Carr & Telow

1929 - Sign moved from lot 15 to lot 14, Block A, Legge Tract.
Owner - General Petroleum Corp.

1929 - Sign connected with two transformers
Owner - Western Oil Refining Co.
Contractor - Claude Neon Electrical Products Corp.

1929 - One cloth sign 4' x 8' with four sides - 2' x 4' supports
Owner - Chas Forbes
Contractor - Carr & Telow

? - Unidentifiable change made to sign (date not on permit)
Contractor/Architect - Carr-Bishop

1932 - Cloth sign erected, 3' x 21'8"
Owner - Goodrich Silvertown, Inc.
Contractor - Carr and Carter

1935 - Metal sign erected 5' x 8'
Owner - Goodrich Silvertown Stores, Inc.
Contractor - Walter G. Jackson

1940 - Two lavatories and two water closets installed with an ex. sewer
Plumber - JB Parker

1940 - Sewer closed
Plumber - JB Parker

1941 - Steel folding gates installed on the front and a steel wall installed along the rear of the existing building.

? - New sign erected (date not on permit)
Owner - BF Goodrich Tires

? - steel cage erected inside building A (change observed on site)

B. Historical Context

The buildings that make up the gas/service station were built in 1928, during the early years of the automobile era. Like many of the buildings being built around this time in Pasadena, it was Spanish/Mediterranean Revival in style. Since the property is several blocks removed from the main thoroughfare and business district of Pasadena, that being Colorado Boulevard, its significance to the development of the business district is not outstanding.

During the first couple decades of the 1900's, Pasadena was thriving and becoming a major destination, not only for vacationing aristocrats, but for industry and business as well. With the growing popularity and use of the automobile, it became necessary to have service stations and repair shops, many of which sprung up around the area. The C.F. Forbes service station was one of these. In and of itself the station has no unique cultural or historical significance.

There is very little information recorded on this particular property, which makes it difficult to trace a specific history but also indicates that it was not considered historically unique or extraordinary.

Part II. ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural Character: The building combines the massiveness, load bearing walls, and detailing of the Mediterranean / Spanish Revival style of the nearby Civic Center with the horizontal lines and large openings associated with its function as an automobile service station.

2. Condition of Fabric: The building fabric appears to be structurally sound, however, there is severe weathering, rust and water damage to all finishes.

B. Description of Exterior

Building "A":

1. Overall Dimensions: Building "A" is 21 feet wide x 81 feet long. The building is one story in height, and does not have any basements, lofts, etc. The general layout of the building, from east to west (Photo CA-2616-A-1, left to right) is as follows: the easternmost section of the building was a automobile repair area, open on the north and west sides, and capable of servicing 2 vehicles simultaneously. This section appears to be different in height than the adjacent

section (Photos CA-2616-A-2, CA-2616-A-3), which may indicate that the building was actually made of 2 distinct metal building systems joined together by a site-fabricated northern facade. The western portion of the building contained the parts storage / workshop area.

2. Foundations: The foundation is assumed to be concrete - actual dimensions are not apparent by visual inspection.

3. Walls: The walls are beige painted, galvanized sheet metal, flat and smooth in cross section. The column portions of the building are beige painted lath and plaster over a C-channel metal frame, attached to the metal columns of the building. The bottom portion of the large openings in the east section of the building are protected by raised concrete "bumpers" (Photo CA-2616-A-7, far left; Photos CA-2616-A-1, CA-2616-A-2, CA-2616-A-8). The source of the materials is not known. In the frieze of the north and the east wall, signage consisting of raised plastic and/or metal lettering was placed. The bolts and bolt holes for this signage are still visible in the frieze.

4. Structural Systems, Framing: The structural columns are steel "I" sections. The floor system is concrete slab-on-grade. The roof framing consists of 6 inch "C" steel channels spaced approximately 42" on center (Photo CA-2616-A-6). Steel tie rods run diagonally across the main spaces. The roofing material is galvanized corrugated sheet metal.

5. Porches, stoops, balconies, bulkheads: Not applicable.

6. Chimneys: Not applicable.

7. Openings:

a. Doorways and doors: All exterior man-doors are hollow metal, either flush or 2-panel with glazing in the upper panel (Photo CA-2616-A-7). These doors have no knobs or handles, but rather are operated by key and deadbolt. The eastern service bay has expanding metal gates with padlocks (Photo CA-2616-A-5) to secure the opening.

b. Windows and shutters: The south elevation of the building, western section, has standard metal frame fixed industrial sash windows, 6 lite/2 high. The south elevation of the building, eastern section, has a series of standard metal frame industrial sash windows, usually 20 lite/4 high, with an 6 lite/2 high operable "hopper" in the center of each window (Photo CA-2616-A-7) infilling between the plaster areas. The exterior doors have transom windows above (Photo CA-2616-A-7). The glazing in all windows has been painted opaque.

There are no shutters on this building.

8. Roof:

a. Shape, covering: The roof is considered "flat", with a gentle slope to the south side of the building for drainage. Waterproofing consists of galvanized corrugated sheet metal roofing.

b. Cornice, eaves: The north and east walls extend to form decorative parapets with a concave cornice. These parapets are consist of a lath-

and-plaster front face and a flat galvanized sheet metal rear face attached to steel "C" channels which are attached to the steel framing below. The parapets are capped with a layer of clay barrel tiles which overhang the cornice slightly (Photo CA-2616-A-7, CA-2616-A-8). There is no gutter system on this building.

c. Dormers, cupolas, towers: Not applicable.

Building "B":

1. Overall Dimensions: Building "B" is 24 feet wide x 80 feet long. The building is one story in height, and does not have any basements, lofts, etc. The general layout of the building, from south to north (Photo CA-2616-B-1, left to right) is as follows: the southernmost section or "bay" of the building was a general storage/work area and contained utility functions, such as electrical panels and a large washbasin (Photo CA-2616-B-11). The center portion of the building contained the area where cars were serviced, and is characterized by its large opening (Photo CA-2616-B-7). The northernmost portion of the building contained the customer service/office area (Photos CA-2616-B-8, CA-2616-B-9).

2. Foundations: The foundation is assumed to be concrete - actual dimensions are not apparent by visual inspection.

3. Walls: The walls are smooth plaster over load-bearing clay brick. Cornices are plaster over wood molding (Photo CA-2616-B-4, upper right corner). The plaster is finished with light beige colored paint. The bottom portion of the walls is painted chartreuse green (Photo CA-2616-B-10). The source of the materials is not known. The frieze of the north and the east wall has a decorative metal "belt course" which runs across the head of the door and window openings (Photo CA-2616-B-10). These 6' long metal sections, when connected end to end, define the bottom of the frieze with a set of 3 horizontal lines. Above this "belt course", signage consisting of raised plastic and/or metal lettering was placed. The bolts and bolt holes for this signage are still visible in the frieze.

4. Structural Systems, Framing: The exterior walls are 13" thick brick cavity walls. It is likely that the cavity is filled and contains reinforcing. The floor system is concrete slab-on-grade. The roof framing consists of wood trusses at 24" on center (Photo CA-2616-B-6). At approximately every 6th truss, 1" diameter metal tie bars connect the bottom chord of the truss to the load bearing masonry walls. The roof deck is tongue-and-groove wood (Photo CA-2616-B-6).

5. Porches, stoops, balconies, bulkheads: Not applicable.

6. Chimneys: Not applicable.

7. Openings:

a. Doorways and doors: The door in the customer service area (Photo CA-2616-B-10) has a wood frame with a transom window above; wood stiles; a wood kickplate, approximately 18" high with a mail slot, a glass panel, a padlock and hasp, and a brass pull handle with push-button. The door to the parts/workroom (Photo CA-2616-B-3, foreground) is a wood panel door with a brass knob and keyhole plate. The door has been boarded shut on the exterior and the interior (Photo CA-2616-B-12,

left wall). The center service bay has an expanding metal gate (Photo CA-2616-B-7) to secure the opening.

b. Windows and shutters: The northernmost portion of the building (Photo CA-2616-B-2, right) has large "picture windows" (minimal or no mullions) which have decorative recessed wood lintels and scrollwork (Photo CA-2616-B-5) imitative of the Spanish Colonial Revival Style, painted chartreuse green. The southernmost portion of the building has standard metal frame industrial sash windows, 24 lite/4 high, with an 8 lite/2 high operable "hopper" in the center of each window. The glazing in these windows has been painted opaque.

There are no shutters on this building.

8. Roof:

a. Shape, covering: The roof is considered "flat", with a gentle slope in the trusses to the west side of the building for drainage. Waterproofing consists of a built-up asphalt membrane.

b. Cornice, eaves: The north and east walls extend to form decorative parapets with a concave cornice. The parapets are capped with a layer of clay barrel tiles which overhang the cornice slightly (Photo CA-2616-B-5). A less ornamental parapet with a stepped brick cornice (Photo CA-2616-B-4) prevents roof drainage onto the south wall of the building. A continuous gutter system on the west wall of the building diverts rainwater to a single downspout at the southwest corner (Photo CA-2616-B-4).

c. Dormers, cupolas, towers: Not applicable.

C. Description of the Interior

Building "A":

1. Floor plans: See sketch plans. No original plans are available.

2. Stairways: Not applicable.

3. Flooring: The flooring in the south and center portion of the building is exposed concrete slab, smooth finish, natural color. The flooring in the bathroom is sheet linoleum, possibly containing asbestos. The flooring is so badly deteriorated that it is impossible to ascertain its original color.

4. Wall and ceiling finish: The walls are finished with flat galvanized sheet metal, painted beige with a teal green wainscot accent (Photo CA-2616-A-6).

5. Openings:

a. Doorways and doors: A typical door is metal, 2 panel, obscure glass above/solid below, painted (teal color).

b. Windows: A single transom window above the restroom door (Photo CA-2616-A-6) provides additional borrowed daylight to the restroom.

6. Trim: Casework includes miscellaneous wood shelves and storage racks (Photo CA-2616-A-9).

7. Hardware: Not applicable.

8. Mechanical equipment:

a. Heating, ventilation, air conditioning: Not applicable.

b. Lighting, electrical: The building has standard porcelain light sockets and metal reflectors (Photo CA-2616-A-6).

c. Plumbing: A single washbasin (Photo CA-2616-A-6, behind man-door) and toilet are the only plumbing devices in the building. A sign on the west jamb of the north opening indicates this room is for "MEN".

d. Signaling:). A small electrical bell, akin to a ship's horn (Photo CA-2616-A-6, on beam approx. 2' above door transom) was probably used as a signaling or paging device.

9. Original furnishings: not applicable.

Building "B":

1. Floor plans: See sketch plans. No original plans are available.

2. Stairways: Not applicable.

3. Flooring: The flooring in the south and center portion of the building is exposed concrete slab, washed sand finish, red color. The flooring in the northernmost portion of the building is composition tile, possibly containing asbestos. The flooring is so badly deteriorated that it is impossible to ascertain its original color (Photos CA-2616-B-8, CA-2616-B-9).

4. Wall and ceiling finish: The walls and ceiling are finished with lath on plaster, painted mint green. The east wall of the customer service area was partially covered with white pegboard, and some later additions of wooden partitions (Photo CA-2618-B-8, right) are finished with wood paneling.

5. Openings:

a. Doorways and doors: A typical door is wood, 2 panel, glass above/wood below, painted (teal color), with 1 x 4 trim around the frame (Photo CA-2618-B-6).

b. Windows: A single gabled skylight towards the southwest corner of the customer service area, 3' x 4', provides additional daylight.

6. Trim: Casework includes a workbench with bookcases (Photo CA-2616-B-7) and a wall-mounted wooden tire rack (Photo CA-2616-B-8).

7. Hardware: Not applicable.

8. Mechanical equipment:

a. Heating, ventilation, air conditioning: Not applicable.

b. Lighting, electrical: The building has standard porcelain light sockets and metal reflectors (Photo CA-2616-B-7, on bottom chords of trusses).

c. Plumbing: A single large washbasin (Photo CA-2616-B-11, right) and a hose spigot (Photo CA-2616-B-10, lower left) are the only plumbing devices in the building.

d. Signaling:). A small electrical buzzer/horn, akin to a ship's horn (Photo CA-2616-B-6, top, center) was probably used as a signaling or paging device.

9. Original furnishings: not applicable.

D. Site:

1. General setting and orientation, and neighborhood context: Building "A" faces north, with an additional large opening to the west, and building "B" faces east; this creates a building complex which orients to the street corner, the intersection of Raymond Avenue and Walnut Street, serving to attract and accommodate the circulation patterns of potential customers driving through the intersection in their automobiles. There do not appear to be any climatological factors in the orientation of the buildings. By setting the buildings to the south and east of the site to accommodate the automobiles, the service station established a siting pattern that was unique from other pre-automobile and many non-automobile buildings, which normally were built as close to the street corner as possible. The openness of the site at the street corner makes this service station an identifiable physical landmark and orientation point within the neighborhood, as is perhaps its most significant contribution to the overall historic fabric of the Old Pasadena Historic District.

2. Historic Landscape Design: There is no landscape design (planters, walkways, etc.) on the site. A large tree has grown adjacent to the alley south of Building "A" (Photo CA-2616-A-2), but it is not known if this was planted in response to on-site conditions. Site paving consists of asphaltic concrete interrupted by pads of red concrete with a washed sand finish.

3. Outbuildings: The red concrete pads described above (Photo CA-2616 -2, center and right, seen as relatively smooth and free of cracks) are the probable locations of three gas pump islands. Three oval-shaped patches within the concrete, two oriented in a north-south axis and one oriented in an east-west axis, give evidence of raised concrete islands upon which the gas pumps were placed. There is no historical evidence available to suggest any covering or roof over the pump areas.

Part III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

A. Architectural Drawings: none available.

B. Historic Views:

Sanborn Map Co., NY 1931 - produced map of area which shows building, including placement of original gas pumps. Map was updated by 1955 to show new placement of pumps, not updated since then to show complete removal of pumps. "Update" was pasted over original map, but original marking are still visible. This map is available at the Pasadena Historical Society.

City of Pasadena has an original photograph taken circa 1970's that shows the site as a Texaco station. This photograph is in the "address file" on 195 N. Raymond. The file is stored in the basement of the Hale Building at 175 North Garfield Avenue, Pasadena, California.

C. Interviews:

Mrs. Sheri Voris, historian for Texaco - Mrs. Voris was contacted regarding any records Texaco may still have on the property. She researched, but was unable to locate any records since the station was operated as an independent station (franchise) and not a part of the Texaco Corporation. All records were kept solely by the proprietors.

The following persons were also contacted for information:

1. Mary Jo Winder at Pasadena City Hall - The only information the City has besides the building permits is the "address file" for 195 North Raymond.

2. Elizabeth Means at Pasadena Heritage - Pasadena Heritage has no information on the property.

3. Carolyn Garner at the Pasadena Public Library, Main Branch - The library has no records on the property.

4. Alix at UCLA Archeological Center - was contacted regarding a search to see if the property had ever been designated as an archeological site, or if anything of archeological significance had ever been found on or near the property. A search was conducted and came up negative.

D. Bibliography

Pasadena Telephone Directory, The Los Angeles Directory Co., Los Angeles, 1928-1932 editions, 1961 edition, 1970 edition.

Pasadena, City of:
- Building Department - files of all building permits on record with the city of the property, including original permit to erect a building, and subsequent permits to make alterations or repairs.

- Design and Historic Preservation Department - has "address file" of miscellaneous information on 195 North Raymond Avenue.

Pasadena Historical Society - houses the historic phone books form which some of the information in this report was taken. As noted above it also contains the 1931 map which shows the site in its original form. More information on the site may be contained here.

UCLA Archeological Center - conducted a survey of the site to determine if any significant archeological finds had been uncovered on or around the property. Their study revealed nothing of import.

National Register Nomination Report - contains data on the historical significance of the site.

E. Likely Sources not yet Investigated: LA County Hall of Records

F. Supplemental material:

Photographs taken by Tavo Olmos for HABS records.

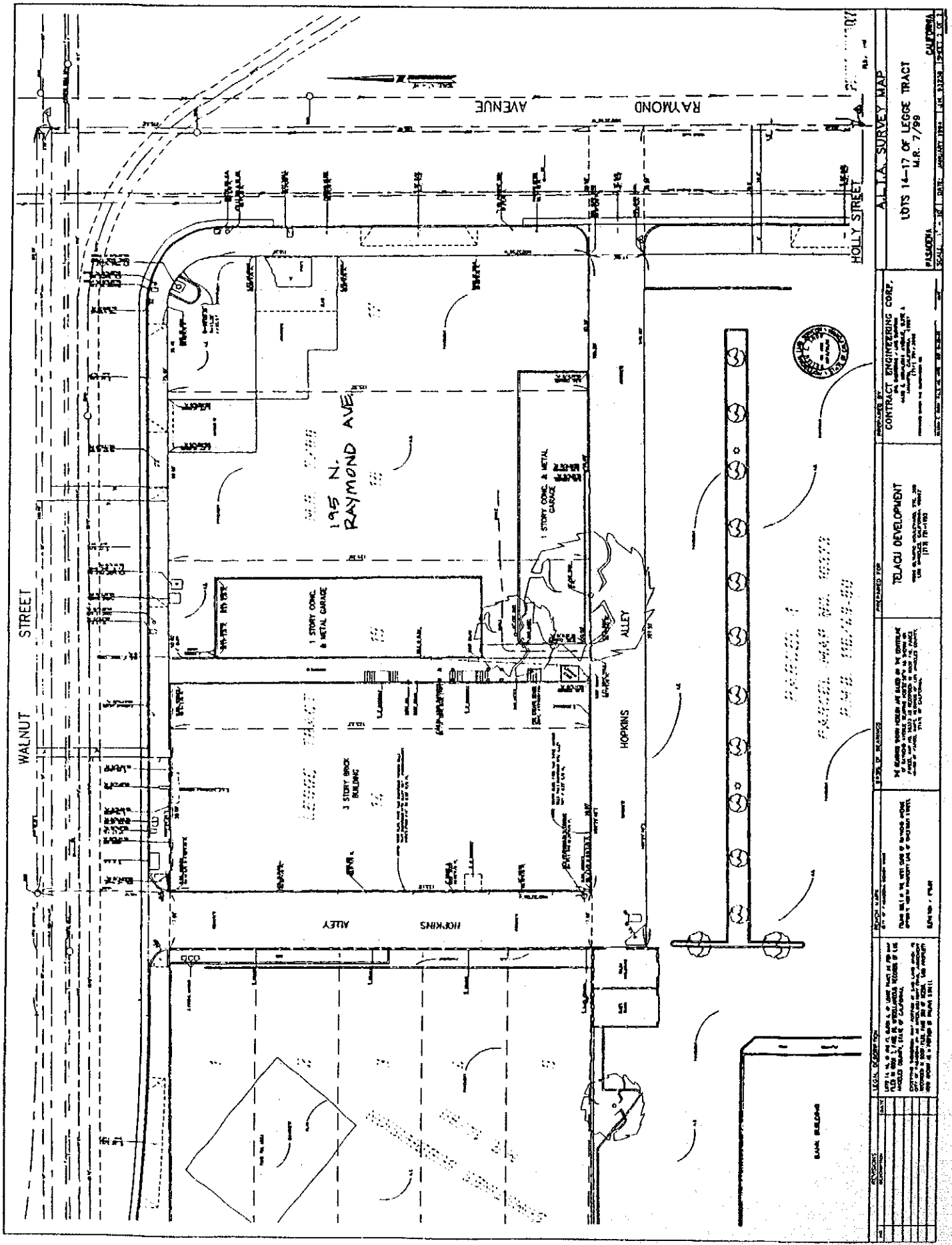
Building Permits for the original erection of the building and for subsequent changes to the building and property

PART IV PROJECT INFORMATION

This report is a mitigative recording required by a Memorandum of Agreement by and among the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, and the California State Historic Preservation Officer regarding the development of the TELACU Courtyard Apartments, 42 East Walnut Street, Pasadena, California.

This documentation is being undertaken on advisement from the National Parks and Recreation Department because of the planned demolition of the historic buildings which comprise the gas/service station at 195 North Raymond Avenue.

Stephen Kuchenski, AIA of Bahr Vermeer and Haecker Architects, Ltd., is responsible for supervising the project, and is ultimately responsible for its completion. Kim Herney, also of Bahr Vermeer and Haecker Architects, Ltd. acted as his assistant in performing some of the research and in writing the Title Page and Parts I, III, and IV. Mr. Kuchenski did the site research and wrote Part II. He also edited and revised the entire document. The research and writing were done over the period extending from December 1994 to March, 1995, the document being completed on March 7, 1995.


RAYMOND AVENUE
HOLLY STREET
WALNUT STREET
195 N. RAYMOND AVE
1 STORY CONC. & METAL GARAGE
1 STORY BRICK BUILDING
HOPKINS ALLEY
A.L.T.A. SURVEY MAP
LOTS 14-17 OF LEGGE TRACT
M.R. 7/99
CONTRACT ENGINEERING CORP.
TEJACU DEVELOPMENT